

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An image processing apparatus having a first area judgment unit for judging whether an inputted pixel is an edge pixel of a character image, a second area judgment unit for judging whether the pixel in a edge area having an intensity variation level equal to, or greater than an intensity variation level of a halftone image edge area, a natural image edge selection unit for specifying an edge pixel of a halftone image based on judgments of the first area judgment unit and second area judgment unit, and a first correction unit for conduction edge enhancement processing on edge pixels of a character image, and a second correction processing unit for conducting sharpness enhancement processing on edge pixels of a halftone image.